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# DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS

THE SEVEN SEAS

THE FIVE NATIONS

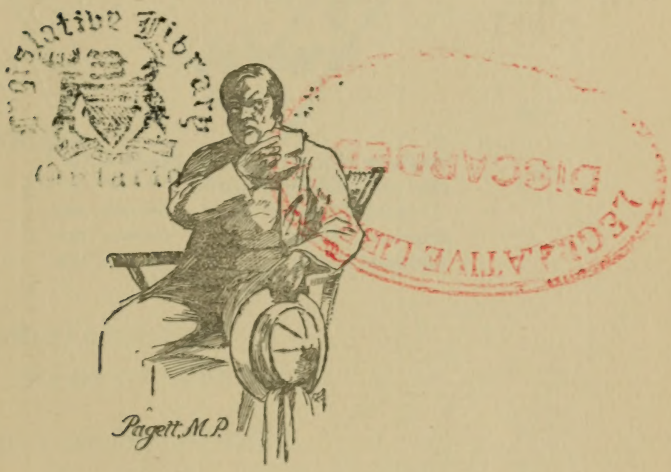
4628

# DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

## AND OTHER VERSES

Poetry

BY RUDYARD KIPLING




METHUEN AND CO.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON

*Eighteenth Edition*

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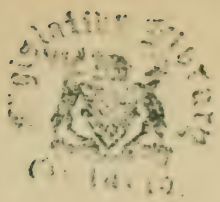
## PRELUDE

*I have eaten your bread and salt,*
*I have drunk your water and wine,*
*The deaths ye died I have watched beside,*
*And the lives ye led were mine.*

*Was there aught that I did not share*
*In vigil or toil or ease,—*
*One joy or woe that I did not know,*
*Dear hearts across the seas?*

*I have written the tale of our life*
*For a sheltered people's mirth,*
*In jesting guise—but ye are wise,*
*And ye know what the jest is worth.*

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES



## GENERAL SUMMARY

We are very slightly changed
From the semi-apes who ranged
India's prehistoric clay;
He that drew the longest bow
Ran his brother down, you know,
As we run men down to-day.

'Dowb,' the first of all his race,
Met the Mammoth face to face
On the lake or in the cave:
Stole the steadiest canoe,
Ate the quarry others slew,
Died—and took the finest grave.

When they scratched the reindeer-bone,
Some one made the sketch his own,
Filched it from the artist—then,
Even in those early days,
Won a simple Viceroy's praise
Through the toil of other men.

Ere they hewed the Sphinx's visage
Favouritism governed kissage,
Even as it does in this age.

Who shall doubt the 'secret hid'
Under Cheops' pyramid
Was that the contractor did
  Cheops out of several millions?
Or that Joseph's sudden rise
To Comptroller of Supplies
Was a fraud of monstrous size
  On King Pharaoh's swart Civilians?

Thus, the artless songs I sing
Do not deal with anything
  New or never said before.
As it was in the beginning
Is to-day official sinning,
  And shall be for evermore!

## ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Old is the song that I sing—
  Old as my unpaid bills—
Old as the chicken that *kitmutgars* bring
  Men at dâk-bungalows—old as the Hills.

AHASUERUS JENKINS of the 'Operatic Own,'
Was dowered with a tenor voice of *super*-Santley tone.
His views on equitation were, perhaps, a trifle queer;
He had no seat worth mentioning, but oh! he had an ear.

He clubbed his wretched company a dozen times a day;
He used to quit his charger in a parabolic way;
His method of saluting was the joy of all beholders,
But Ahasuerus Jenkins had a head upon his shoulders.

He took two months at Simla when the year was at the spring,
And underneath the deodars eternally did sing.
He warbled like a *bul-bul,* but particularly at
Cornelia Agrippina, who was musical and fat.

She controlled a humble husband, who, in turn, controlled a Dept.
Where Cornelia Agrippina's human singing-birds were kept
From April to October on a plump retaining-fee,
Supplied, of course, *per mensem,* by the Indian Treasury.

Cornelia used to sing with him, and Jenkins used to play;
He praised unblushingly her notes, for he was false as they;
So when the winds of April turned the budding roses brown,
Cornelia told her husband:—'Tom, you mustn't send him down.'

They haled him from his regiment, which didn't
much regret him;
They found for him an office-stool, and on that stool
they set him
To play with maps and catalogues three idle hours
a day,
And draw his plump retaining-fee—which means
his double pay.

Now, ever after dinner, when the coffee-cups are
brought,
Ahasuerus waileth o'er the grand pianoforte;
And, thanks to fair Cornelia, his fame hath waxen
great,
And Ahasuerus Jenkins is a Power in the State!

## STUDY OF AN ELEVATION, IN INDIAN INK

This ditty is a string of lies.
But—how the deuce did Gubbins rise?

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Stands at the top of the tree;
And I muse in my bed on the reasons that led
To the hoisting of Potiphar G.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is seven years junior to Me;
Each bridge that he makes either buckles or breaks,
And his work is as rough as he.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is coarse as a chimpanzee;
And I can't understand why you gave him your hand,
Lovely Mehitabel Lee.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is dear to the Powers that Be ;
For They bow and They smile in an affable style,
Which is seldom accorded to Me

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is certain as certain can be
Of a highly paid post which is claimed by a host
Of seniors—including Me.

Careless and lazy is he,
Greatly inferior to Me.
What is the spell that you manage so well,
Commonplace Potiphar G. ?

Lovely Mehitabel Lee,
Let me inquire of thee,
Should I have riz to what Potiphar is,
Hadst thou been mated to Me ?

## DELILAH

We have another Viceroy now, those days are dead and done
Of Delilah Aberyswith and depraved Ulysses Gunne.

Delilah Aberyswith was a lady—not too young—
With a perfect taste in dresses and a badly-bitted tongue,
With a thirst for information, and a greater thirst for praise,
And a little house in Simla in the Prehistoric Days.

By reason of her marriage to a gentleman in power,
Delilah was acquainted with the gossip of the hour;
And many little secrets, of a half-official kind,
Were whispered to Delilah, and she bore them all in mind.

She patronised extensively a man, Ulysses Gunne,
Whose mode of earning money was a low and shameful one.

He wrote for divers papers which, as everybody knows,
Is worse than serving in a shop or scaring off the crows.

He praised her 'queenly beauty' first; and, later on, he hinted
At the 'vastness of her intellect' with compliment unstinted.
He went with her a-riding, and his love for her was such
That he lent her all his horses and—she galled them very much.

One day, THEY brewed a secret of a fine financial sort;
It related to Appointments, to a Man and a Report.
'Twas almost worth the keeping,—only seven people knew it—
And Gunne rose up to seek the truth and patiently ensue it.

It was a Viceroy's Secret, but—perhaps the wine was red—
Perhaps an Aged Councillor had lost his aged head—
Perhaps Delilah's eyes were bright — Delilah's whispers sweet—
The Aged Member told her what 'twere treason to repeat.

Ulysses went a-riding, and they talked of love and flowers;
Ulysses went a-calling, and he called for several hours;
Ulysses went a-waltzing, and Delilah helped him dance—
Ulysses let the waltzes go, and waited for his chance.

The summer sun was setting, and the summer air was still,
The couple went a-walking in the shade of Summer Hill,
The wasteful sunset faded out in turkis-green and gold,
Ulysses pleaded softly, and . . . that bad Delilah told!

Next morn, a startled Empire learnt the all-important news;
Next week, the Aged Councillor was shaking in his shoes;
Next month, I met Delilah and she did not show the least
Hesitation in affirming that Ulysses was a 'beast.'

. . . . . .

We have another Viceroy now, those days are dead and done—
Of Delilah Aberyswith and most mean Ulysses Gunne!

## A LEGEND OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE

This is the reason why Rustum Beg,
Rajah of Kolazai,
Drinketh the 'simpkin' and brandy peg,
Maketh the money to fly,
Vexeth a Government, tender and kind,
Also—but this is a detail—blind.

RUSTUM BEG of Kolazai—slightly backward Native State—
Lusted for a C. S. I.—so began to sanitate.
Built a Gaol and Hospital—nearly built a City drain—
Till his faithful subjects all thought their ruler was insane.

Strange departures made he then—yea, Departments stranger still:
Half a dozen Englishmen helped the Rajah with a will,
Talked of noble aims and high, hinted of a future fine
For the State of Kolazai, on a strictly Western line.

Rajah Rustum held his peace; lowered octroi dues
a half;
Organised a State Police; purified the Civil Staff;
Settled cess and tax afresh in a very liberal way;
Cut temptations of the flesh—also cut the Bukhshi's
pay;

Roused his Secretariat to a fine Mahratta fury,
By a Hookum hinting at supervision of *dasturi*;
Turned the state of Kolazai very nearly upside-
down;
When the end of May was nigh waited his achieve-
ment crown.

Then the Birthday Honours came. Sad to state
and sad to see,
Stood against the Rajah's name nothing more than
*C. I. E.!*

. . . . . .

Things were lively for a week in the State of
Kolazai,
Even now the people speak of that time regret-
fully.

How he disendowed the Gaol—stopped at once the City drain;
Turned to beauty fair and frail—got his senses back again;
Doubled taxes, cesses, all; cleared away each new-built *thana*;
Turned the two-lakh Hospital into a superb *Zenana*;

Heaped upon the Bukhshi Sahib wealth and honours manifold;
Clad himself in Eastern garb—squeezed his people as of old.
Happy, happy Kolazai! Never more will Rustum Beg
Play to catch his Viceroy's eye. He prefers the 'simpkin' peg.

## THE STORY OF URIAH

'Now there were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.'

Jack Barrett went to Quetta
  Because they told him to.
He left his wife at Simla
  On three-fourths his monthly screw.
Jack Barrett died at Quetta
  Ere the next month's pay he drew.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta,
  He didn't understand
The reason of his transfer
  From the pleasant mountain-land.
The season was September,
  And it killed him out of hand.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta
  And there gave up the ghost,
Attempting two men's duty
  In that very healthy post;
And Mrs. Barrett mourned for him
  Five lively months at most.

Jack Barrett's bones at Quetta
  Enjoy profound repose;
But I shouldn't be astonished
  If *now* his spirit knows
The reason of his transfer
  From the Himalayan snows.

And, when the Last Great Bugle Call
  Adown the Hurnai throbs,
When the last grim joke is entered
  In the big black Book of Jobs,
And Quetta graveyards give again
  Their victims to the air,
I shouldn't like to be the man
  Who sent Jack Barrett there.

## THE POST THAT FITTED

Though tangled and twisted the course of true love
This ditty explains,
No tangle 's so tangled it cannot improve
If the Lover has brains.

Ere the steamer bore him Eastward, Sleary was engaged to marry
An attractive girl at Tunbridge, whom he called 'my little Carrie.'
Sleary's pay was very modest; Sleary was the other way.
Who can cook a two-plate dinner on eight poor rupees a day?

Long he pondered o'er the question in his scantly furnished quarters—
Then proposed to Minnie Boffkin, eldest of Judge Boffkin's daughters.
Certainly an impecunious Subaltern was not a catch,
But the Boffkins knew that Minnie mightn't make another match.

So they recognised the business and, to feed and clothe the bride,
Got him made a Something Something somewhere on the Bombay side.
Anyhow, the billet carried pay enough for him to marry—
As the artless Sleary put it:—'Just the thing for me and Carrie.'

Did he, therefore, jilt Miss Boffkin—impulse of a baser mind?
No! He started epileptic fits of an appalling kind.
[Of his *modus operandi* only this much I could gather:—
'Pears' shaving sticks will give you little taste and lots of lather.']

Frequently in public places his affliction used to smite
Sleary with distressing vigour—always in the Boffkins' sight.

Ere a week was over Minnie weepingly returned
his ring,
Told him his 'unhappy weakness' stopped all
thought of marrying.

Sleary bore the information with a chastened holy
joy,—
Epileptic fits don't matter in Political employ,—
Wired three short words to Carrie—took his ticket,
packed his kit—
Bade farewell to Minnie Boffkin in one last, long,
lingering fit.

Four weeks later, Carrie Sleary read—and laughed
until she wept—
Mrs. Boffkin's warning letter on the 'wretched
epilept.'
Year by year, in pious patience, vengeful Mrs. Boff-
kin sits
Waiting for the Sleary babies to develop Sleary's
fits.

## A CODE OF MORALS

Lest you should think this story true
I merely mention I
Evolved it lately. 'Tis a most
Unmitigated misstatement.

Now Jones had left his new-wed bride to keep his
house in order,
And hied away to the Hurrum Hills above the
Afghan border,
To sit on a rock with a heliograph; but ere he left
he taught
His wife the working of the Code that sets the
miles at naught.

And Love had made him very sage, as Nature made
her fair;
So Cupid and Apollo linked, *per* heliograph, the
pair.
At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed her
counsel wise—
At e'en, the dying sunset bore her husband's
homilies.

He warned her 'gainst seductive youths in scarlet clad and gold,
As much as 'gainst the blandishments paternal of the old;
But kept his gravest warnings for (hereby the ditty hangs)
That snowy-haired Lothario, Lieutenant-General Bangs.

'Twas General Bangs, with Aide and Staff, that tittupped on the way,
When they beheld a heliograph tempestuously at play.
They thought of Border risings, and of stations sacked and burnt—
So stopped to take the message down—and this is what they learnt—

'Dash dot dot, dot, dot dash, dot dash dot' twice
The General swore.
'Was ever General Officer addressed as "dear" before?

'"My Love," i' faith! "My Duck," Gadzooks!
"My darling popsy-wop!"
'Spirit of great Lord Wolseley, *who* is on that
mountain top?'

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute; the gilded
Staff were still,
As, dumb with pent-up mirth, they booked that
message from the hill;
For clear as summer lightning-flare, the husband's
warning ran:—
'Don't dance or ride with General Bangs—a most
immoral man.'

[At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed her
counsel wise—
But, howsoever Love be blind, the world at large
hath eyes.]
With damnatory dot and dash he heliographed his
wife
Some interesting details of the General's private
life.

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute; the shining Staff were still,
And red and ever redder grew the General's shaven gill.
And this is what he said at last (his feelings matter not):—
'I think we 've tapped a private line. Hi! Threes about there! Trot!'

All honour unto Bangs, for ne'er did Jones thereafter know
By word or act official who read off that helio.;
But the tale is on the Frontier, and from Michni to Mool*tan*
They know the worthy General as 'that most immoral man.'

## PUBLIC WASTE

Walpole talks of 'a man and his price'—
List to a ditty queer—
The sale of a Deputy-Acting-Vice-
Resident-Engineer,
Bought like a bullock, hoof and hide,
By the Little Tin Gods on the Mountain Side.

By the Laws of the Family Circle 'tis written in letters of brass
That only a Colonel from Chatham can manage the Railways of State,
Because of the gold on his breeks, and the subjects wherein he must pass;
Because in all matters that deal not with Railways his knowledge is great.

Now Exeter Battleby Tring had laboured from boyhood to eld
On the Lines of the East and the West, eke of the North and South;

Many Lines had he built and surveyed—important
the posts which he held;
And the Lords of the Iron Horse were dumb when
he opened his mouth.

Black as the raven his garb, and his heresies jettier
still—
Hinting that Railways required lifetimes of study
and knowledge—
Never clanked sword by his side—Vauban he knew
not nor drill—
Nor was his name on the list of the men who had
passed through the 'College.'

Wherefore the Little Tin Gods harried their little
tin souls,
Seeing he came not from Chatham, jingled no spurs
at his heels,
Knowing that, nevertheless, was he first on the
Government rolls
For the billet of 'Railway Instructor to Little Tin
Gods on Wheels.'

Letters not seldom they wrote him, 'having the honour to state,'
It would be better for all men if he were laid on the shelf:
Much would accrue to his bank-book, an he consented to wait
Until the Little Tin Gods built him a berth for himself.

'Special, well paid, and exempt from the Law of the Fifty and Five,
Even to Ninety and Nine'—these were the terms of the pact:
Thus did the Little Tin Gods (long may Their Highnesses thrive!)
Silence his mouth with rupees, keeping their Circle intact;

Appointing a Colonel from Chatham who managed the Bhamo State Line
(The which was one mile and one furlong—a guaranteed twenty-inch gauge),

So Exeter Battleby Tring consented his claims to resign,
And died, on four thousand a month, in the ninetieth year of his age.

## WHAT HAPPENED

Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, pride of Bow Bazaar,
Owner of a native press, 'Barrishter-at-Lar,'
Waited on the Government with a claim to wear
Sabres by the bucketful, rifles by the pair.

Then the Indian Government winked a wicked wink,
Said to Chunder Mookerjee: 'Stick to pen and ink.
They are safer implements, but, if you insist,
We will let you carry arms wheresoe'er you list.'

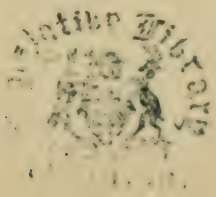
Hurree Chunder Mookerjee sought the gunsmith and
Bought the tubes of Lancaster, Ballard, Dean, and Bland,
Bought a shiny bowie-knife, bought a town-made sword,
Jingled like a carriage-horse when he went abroad.

*But* the Indian Government, always keen to please,
Also gave permission to horrid men like these—
Yar Mahommed Yusufzai, down to kill or steal,
Chimbu Singh from Bikaneer, Tantia the Bhil;

Killar Khan the Marri chief, Jowar Singh the Sikh,
Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat, Abdul Huq Rafiq—
He was a Wahabi; last, little Boh Hla-oo
Took advantage of the act—took a Snider too.

They were unenlightened men, Ballard knew them not,
They procured their swords and guns chiefly on the spot,
And the lore of centuries, plus a hundred fights,
Made them slow to disregard one another's rights.

With a unanimity dear to patriot hearts
All those hairy gentlemen out of foreign parts
Said: 'The good old days are back—let us go to war!'
Swaggered down the Grand Trunk Road into Bow Bazaar.



Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat found a hide-bound flail;
Chimbu Singh from Bikaneer oiled his Tonk jezail;
Yar Mahommed Yusufzai spat and grinned with glee
As he ground the butcher-knife of the Khyberee.

Jowar Singh the Sikh procured sabre, quoit, and mace,
Abdul Huq, Wahabi, took the dagger from its place,
While amid the jungle-grass danced and grinned and jabbered
Little Boh Hla-oo and cleared the dah-blade from the scabbard.

What became of Mookerjee? Soothly, who can say?
Yar Mahommed only grins in a nasty way,
Jowar Singh is reticent, Chimbu Singh is mute,
But the belts of all of them simply bulge with loot.

What became of Ballard's guns? Afghans black and grubby
Sell them for their silver weight to the men of Pubbi;

And the shiny bowie-knife and the town-made
sword are
Hanging in a Marri camp just across the Border.

What became of Mookerjee? Ask Mahommed Yar
Prodding Siva's sacred bull down the Bow Bazaar.
Speak to placid Nubbee Baksh—question land and
sea—
Ask the Indian Congress men—only don't ask me!

## THE MAN WHO COULD WRITE

Shun—shun the Bowl! That fatal, facile drink
  Has ruined many geese who dipped their quills in't;
Bribe, murder, marry, but steer clear of Ink
  Save when you write receipts for paid-up bills in't.
There may be silver in the 'blue-black'—all
I know of is the iron and the gall.

Boanerges Blitzen, servant of the Queen,
Is a dismal failure—is a Might-have-been.
In a luckless moment he discovered men
Rise to high position through a ready pen.

Boanerges Blitzen argued therefore—'I,
With the selfsame weapon, can attain as high.'
Only he did not possess when he made the trial,
Wicked wit of C-lv-n, irony of L—l.

[Men who spar with Government need, to back
  their blows,
Something more than ordinary journalistic prose.]

Never young Civilian's prospects were so bright,
Till an Indian paper found that he could write:
Never young Civilian's prospects were so dark,
When the wretched Blitzen wrote to make his
mark.

Certainly he scored it, bold, and black, and firm,
In that Indian paper—made his seniors squirm,
Quoted office scandals, wrote the tactless truth—
Was there ever known a more misguided youth?

When the Rag he wrote for praised his plucky
game,
Boanerges Blitzen felt that this was Fame:
When the men he wrote of shook their heads and
swore,
Boanerges Blitzen only wrote the more.

Posed as Young Ithuriel, resolute and grim,
Till he found promotion didn't come to him;
Till he found that reprimands weekly were his lot,
And his many Districts curiously hot.

Till he found his furlough strangely hard to win,
Boanerges Blitzen didn't care a pin:
Then it seemed to dawn on him something wasn't
right—
Boanerges Blitzen put it down to 'spite.'

Languished in a District desolate and dry;
Watched the Local Government yearly pass him by;
Wondered where the hitch was; called it most
unfair.

. . . . . .

That was seven years ago—and he still is there.

## PINK DOMINOES

> 'They are fools who kiss and tell'—
> Wisely has the poet sung.
> Man may hold all sorts of posts
> If he 'll only hold his tongue.

JENNY and Me were engaged, you see,
  On the eve of the Fancy Ball;
So a kiss or two was nothing to you
  Or any one else at all.

Jenny would go in a domino—
  Pretty and pink but warm;
While I attended, clad in a splendid
  Austrian uniform.

Now we had arranged, through notes exchanged
  Early that afternoon,
At Number Four to waltz no more,
  But to sit in the dusk and spoon.

I wish you to see that Jenny and Me
  Had barely exchanged our troth;
So a kiss or two was strictly due
  By, from, and between us both.

When Three was over, an eager lover,
  I fled to the gloom outside;
And a Domino came out also
  Whom I took for my future bride.

That is to say, in a casual way,
  I slipped my arm around her:
With a kiss or two (which is nothing to you),
  And ready to kiss I found her.

She turned her head and the name she said
  Was certainly not my own;
But ere I could speak, with a smothered shriek
  She fled and left me alone.

Then Jenny came, and I saw with shame
  She'd doffed her domino;
And I had embraced an alien waist—
  But I did not tell her so.

Next morn I knew that there were two
  Dominoes pink, and one
Had cloaked the spouse of Sir Julian Vouse,
  Our big Political gun.

Sir J. was old, and her hair was gold,
  And her eye was a blue cerulean;
And the name she said when she turned her head
  Was not in the least like 'Julian.'

Now wasn't it nice, when want of *pice*
  Forbade us twain to marry,
That old Sir J., in the kindest way,
  Made me his Secre*tarry*?

## MUNICIPAL

'Why is my District death-rate low?'
Said Binks of Hezabad.
'Wells, drains, and sewage-outfalls are
'My own peculiar fad.
'I learnt a lesson once. It ran
'Thus,' said that most veracious man:—

It was an August evening and, in snowy garments clad,
I paid a round of visits in the lines of Hezabad;
When, presently, my Waler saw, and did not like at all,
A Commissariat elephant careering down the Mall.

I couldn't see the driver, and across my mind it rushed
That that Commissariat elephant had suddenly gone *musth*.
I didn't care to meet him, and I couldn't well get down,
So I let the Waler have it, and we headed for the town.

The buggy was a new one and, praise Dykes, it stood the strain,
Till the Waler jumped a bullock just above the City Drain;
And the next that I remember was a hurricane of squeals,
And the creature making toothpicks of my five-foot patent wheels.

He seemed to want the owner, so I fled, distraught with fear,
To the Main Drain sewage outfall while he snorted in my ear—
Reached the four-foot drain-head safely and, in darkness and despair,
Felt the brute's proboscis fingering my terror-stiffened hair.

Heard it trumpet on my shoulder—tried to crawl a little higher—
Found the Main Drain sewage-outfall blocked, some eight feet up, with mire;

And, for twenty reeking minutes, Sir, my very marrow froze,
While the trunk was feeling blindly for a purchase on my toes!

It missed me by a fraction, but my hair was turning grey
Before they called the drivers up and dragged the brute away.
Then I sought the City Elders, and my words were very plain.
They flushed that four-foot drain-head and—it never choked again.

You may hold with surface-drainage, and the sun-for-garbage cure,
Till you've been a periwinkle shrinking coyly up a sewer.
*I* believe in well-flushed culverts. . . .
This is why the death-rate's small;
And, if you don't believe me, get *shikarred* yourself. That's all.

## THE LAST DEPARTMENT

Twelve hundred million men are spread
About this Earth, and I and You
Wonder, when You and I are dead,
What will those luckless millions do?

'None whole or clean,' we cry, 'or free from stain
Of favour.' Wait awhile, till we attain
The Last Department where nor fraud nor fools,
Nor grade nor greed, shall trouble us again.

Fear, Favour, or Affection—what are these
To the grim Head who claims our services?
I never knew a wife or interest yet
Delay that *pukka* step, miscalled 'decease';

When leave, long overdue, none can deny;
When idleness of all Eternity
Becomes our furlough, and the marigold
Our thriftless, bullion-minting Treasury

Transferred to the Eternal Settlement,
Each in his strait, wood-scantled office pent,
  No longer Brown reverses Smith's appeals,
Or Jones records his Minute of Dissent.

And One, long since a pillar of the Court,
As mud between the beams thereof is wrought;
  And One who wrote on phosphates for the crops
Is subject-matter of his own Report.

These be the glorious ends whereto we pass—
Let Him who Is, go call on Him who Was;
  And He shall see the *mallie* steals the slab
For currie-grinder, and for goats the grass.

A breath of wind, a Border bullet's flight,
A draught of water, or a horse's fright—
  The droning of the fat *Sheristadar*
Ceases, the punkah stops, and falls the night

For you or Me. Do those who live decline
The step that offers, or their work resign?
  Trust me, To-day's Most Indispensables,
Five hundred men can take your place or mine.

# OTHER VERSES

Legislative Library

## MY RIVAL

I go to concert, party, ball—
  What profit is in these?
I sit alone against the wall
  And strive to look at ease.
The incense that is mine by right
  They burn before Her shrine;
And that's because I'm seventeen
  And she is forty-nine.

I cannot check my girlish blush,
  My colour comes and goes;
I redden to my finger-tips,
  And sometimes to my nose.
But She is white where white should be,
  And red where red should shine.
The blush that flies at seventeen
  Is fixed at forty-nine.

I wish *I* had Her constant cheek:
  I wish that I could sing
All sorts of funny little songs,
  Not quite the proper thing.
I'm very *gauche* and very shy,
  Her jokes aren't in my line;
And, worst of all, I'm seventeen
  While She is forty-nine.

The young men come, the young men go,
  Each pink and white and neat,
She's older than their mothers, but
  They grovel at Her feet.
They walk beside Her *'rickshaw* wheels—
  None ever walk by mine;
And that's because I'm seventeen
  And She is forty-nine.

She rides with half a dozen men
  (She calls them 'boys' and 'mashers'),
I trot along the Mall alone;
  My prettiest frocks and sashes

Don't help to fill my programme-card,
  And vainly I repine
From ten to two A.M. Ah me!
  Would I were forty-nine.

She calls me 'darling,' 'pet,' and 'dear,'
  And 'sweet retiring maid.'
I'm always at the back, I know
  She puts me in the shade.
She introduces me to men—
  'Cast' lovers, I opine,
For sixty takes to seventeen,
  Nineteen to forty-nine.

But even She must older grow
  And end Her dancing days,
She can't go on for ever so
  At concerts, balls, and plays.
One ray of priceless hope I see
  Before my footsteps shine;
Just think, that She'll be eighty-one
  When I am forty-nine!

## TO THE UNKNOWN GODDESS

WILL you conquer my heart with your beauty, my soul going out from afar?
Shall I fall to your hand as a victim of crafty and cautious *shikar*?

Have I met you and passed you already, unknowing, unthinking, and blind?
Shall I meet you next season at Simla, O sweetest and best of your kind?

Does the P. and O. bear you to meward, or, clad in short frocks in the West,
Are you growing the charms that shall capture and torture the heart in my breast?

Will you stay in the Plains till September—my passion as warm as the day?
Will you bring me to book on the Mountains, or where the thermantidotes play?

When the light of your eyes shall make pallid the
mean lesser lights I pursue,
And the charm of your presence shall lure me from
love of the gay 'thirteen-two';

When the peg and the pigskin shall please not;
when I buy me Calcutta-built clothes;
When I quit the Delight of Wild Asses; for-
swearing the swearing of oaths;

As a deer to the hand of the hunter when I turn
'mid the gibes of my friends;
When the days of my freedom are numbered, and
the life of the bachelor ends.

Ah, Goddess! child, spinster, or widow—as of old
on Mars Hill when they raised
To the God that they knew not an altar—so I, a
young Pagan, have praised

The Goddess I know not nor worship; yet, if half
that men tell me be true,
You will come in the future, and therefore these
verses are written to you.

## THE RUPAIYAT OF OMAR KAL'VIN

[Allowing for the difference 'twixt prose and rhymed exaggeration, this ought to reproduce the sense of what Sir A—— told the nation some time ago, when the Government struck from our incomes two per cent.]

Now the New Year, reviving last Year's Debt,
The Thoughtful Fisher casteth wide his Net;
  So I with begging Dish and ready Tongue
Assail all Men for all that I can get.

Imports indeed are gone with all their Dues—
Lo! Salt a Lever that I dare not use,
  Nor may I ask the Tillers in Bengal—
Surely my Kith and Kin will not refuse

Pay—and I promise by the Dust of Spring,
Retrenchment. If my promises can bring
  Comfort, Ye have Them now a thousand-fold—
By Allah! I will promise *Anything!*

Indeed, indeed, Retrenchment oft before
I swore—but did I mean it when I swore?
  And then, and then, We wandered to the Hills,
And so the Little Less became Much More.

Whether at Boileaugunge or Babylon,
I know not how the wretched Thing is done,
  The Items of Receipt grow surely small;
The Items of Expense mount one by one.

I cannot help it. What have I to do
With One and Five, or Four, or Three, or Two?
  Let Scribes spit Blood and Sulphur as they please,
Or Statesmen call me foolish—Heed not you.

Behold, I promise—Anything You will.
Behold, I greet you with an empty Till—
  Ah! Fellow-Sinners, of your Charity
Seek not the Reason of the Dearth but fill.

For if I sinned and fell, where lies the Gain
Of Knowledge? Would it ease you of your Pain
  To know the tangled Threads of Revenue,
I ravel deeper in a hopeless Skein?

'Who hath not Prudence'—what was it I said,
Of Her who paints Her Eyes and tires Her Head,
And jibes and mocks the People in the Street,
And fawns upon them for Her thriftless Bread?

Accursed is She of Eve's daughters—She
Hath cast off Prudence, and Her End shall be
Destruction. . . . Brethren, of your Bounty grant
Some portion of your daily Bread to *Me*.

## PAGETT, M.P.

> The toad beneath the harrow knows
> Exactly where each tooth-point goes;
> The butterfly upon the road
> Preaches contentment to that toad.

PAGETT, M.P., was a liar, and a fluent liar therewith,—
He spoke of the heat of India as 'the Asian Solar Myth';
Came on a four months' visit, to 'study the East' in November,
And I got him to sign an agreement vowing to stay till September.

March came in with the *köil.* Pagett was cool and gay,
Called me a 'bloated Brahmin,' talked of my 'princely pay.'
March went out with the roses. 'Where is your heat?' said he.
'Coming,' said I to Pagett. 'Skittles!' said Pagett, M.P.

April began with the punkah, coolies, and prickly-heat,—
Pagett was dear to mosquitoes, sandflies found him a treat.
He grew speckled and lumpy—hammered, I grieve to say,
Aryan brothers who fanned him, in an illiberal way.

May set in with a dust-storm,—Pagett went down with the sun.
All the delights of the season tickled him one by one.
*Imprimis*—ten days' 'liver'—due to his drinking beer;
Later, a dose of fever—slight, but he called it severe.

Dysent'ry touched him in June, after the *Chota Bursat*—
Lowered his portly person—made him yearn to depart.

He didn't call me a 'Brahmin,' or 'bloated,' or 'overpaid,'
But seemed to think it a wonder that any one ever stayed.

July was a trifle unhealthy,—Pagett was ill with fear,
Called it the 'Cholera Morbus,' hinted that life was dear.
He babbled of 'Eastern exile,' and mentioned his home with tears;
But I hadn't seen *my* children for close upon seven years.

We reached a hundred and twenty once in the Court at noon,
[I've mentioned Pagett was portly] Pagett went off in a swoon.
That was an end to the business; Pagett, the perjured, fled
With a practical, working knowledge of 'Solar Myths' in his head.

And I laughed as I drove from the station, but the mirth died out on my lips
As I thought of the fools like Pagett who write of their 'Eastern trips,'
And the sneers of the travelled idiots who duly misgovern the land,
And I prayed to the Lord to deliver another one into my hand.

## LA NUIT BLANCHE

A much-discerning Public hold
  The Singer generally sings
  Of personal and private things,
And prints and sells his past for gold.

Whatever I may here disclaim,
  The very clever folk I sing to
  Will most indubitably cling to
Their pet delusion, just the same.

I HAD seen, as dawn was breaking
  And I staggered to my rest,
Tara Devi softly shaking
  From the Cart Road to the crest
I had seen the spurs of Jakko
  Heave and quiver, swell and sink.
Was it Earthquake or tobacco,
  Day of Doom or Night of Drink?

In the full, fresh, fragrant morning
  I observed a camel crawl,
Laws of gravitation scorning,
  On the ceiling and the wall;

Then I watched a fender walking,
  And I heard grey leeches sing,
And a red-hot monkey talking
  Did not seem the proper thing.

Then a Creature, skinned and crimson,
  Ran about the floor and cried,
And they said I had the 'jims' on,
  And they dosed me with bromide,
And they locked me in my bedroom—
  Me and one wee Blood Red Mouse—
Though I said :—'To give my head room
  'You had best unroof the house.'

But my words were all unheeded,
  Though I told the grave M.D.
That the treatment really needed
  Was a dip in open sea
That was lapping just below me,
  Smooth as silver, white as snow,
And it took three men to throw me
  When I found I could not go.

Half the night I watched the Heavens
  Fizz like '81 champagne—
Fly to sixes and to sevens,
  Wheel and thunder back again;
And when all was peace and order
  Save one planet nailed askew,
Much I wept because my warder
  Would not let me set it true.

After frenzied hours of waiting,
  When the Earth and Skies were dumb,
Pealed an awful voice dictating
  An interminable sum,
Changing to a tangled story—
  'What she said you said I said—'
Till the Moon arose in glory,
  And I found her . . . in my head;

Then a Face came, blind and weeping,
  And It couldn't wipe Its eyes,
And It muttered I was keeping
  Back the moonlight from the skies;

So I patted It for pity,
  But It whistled shrill with wrath,
And a huge, black Devil City
  Poured its peoples on my path.

So I fled with steps uncertain
  On a thousand-year long race,
But the bellying of the curtain
  Kept me always in one place;
While the tumult rose and maddened
  To the roar of Earth on fire,
Ere it ebbed and sank and saddened
  To a whisper tense as wire.

In intolerable stillness
  Rose one little, little star,
And it chuckled at my illness,
  And it mocked me from afar;
And its brethren came and eyed me,
  Called the Universe to aid,
Till I lay, with naught to hide me,
  'Neath the Scorn of All Things Made.

Dun and saffron, robed and splendid
  Broke the solemn, pitying Day,
And I knew my pains were ended,
  And I turned and tried to pray;
But my speech was shattered wholly,
  And I wept as children weep,
Till the dawn-wind, softly, slowly,
  Brought to burning eyelids sleep.

## THE LOVERS' LITANY

Eyes of grey—a sodden quay,
Driving rain and falling tears,
As the steamer wears to sea
In a parting storm of cheers.
  Sing, for Faith and Hope are high—
  None so true as you and I—
  Sing the Lovers' Litany:—
  '*Love like ours can never die!*'

Eyes of black—a throbbing keel,
Milky foam to left and right;
Whispered converse near the wheel
In the brilliant tropic night.
  Cross that rules the Southern Sky!
  Stars that sweep, and wheel, and fly,
  Hear the Lovers' Litany:—
  '*Love like ours can never die!*'

Eyes of brown—a dusty plain
Split and parched with heat of June.
Flying hoof and tightened rein,
Hearts that beat the old, old tune.
  Side by side the horses fly,
  Frame we now the old reply
  Of the Lovers' Litany :—
  '*Love like ours can never die!*'

Eyes of blue—the Simla Hills
Silvered with the moonlight hoar;
Pleading of the waltz that thrills,
Dies and echoes round Benmore.
  '*Mabel,*' '*Officers,*' '*Good-bye,*'
  Glamour, wine, and witchery—
  On my soul's sincerity,
  '*Love like ours can never die!*'

Maidens, of your charity,
Pity my most luckless state.
Four times Cupid's debtor I—
Bankrupt in quadruplicate.

Yet, despite this evil case,
An a maiden showed me grace,
Four-and-forty times would I
Sing the Lovers' Litany:—
'*Love like ours can never die!*'

## A BALLAD OF BURIAL

*'Saint Praxed's ever was the Church for peace.'*

If down here I chance to die,
  Solemnly I beg you take
All that is left of 'I'
  To the Hills for old sake's sake.
Pack me very thoroughly
  In the ice that used to slake
Pegs I drank when I was dry—
  This observe for old sake's sake.

To the railway station hie,
  There a single ticket take
For Umballa—goods-train—I
  Shall not mind delay or shake.
I shall rest contentedly
  Spite of clamour coolies make;
Thus in state and dignity
  Send me up for old sake's sake.

Next the sleepy Babu wake,
  Book a Kalka van 'for four.'
Few, I think, will care to make
  Journeys with me any more
As they used to do of yore.
  I shall need a 'special' break—
Thing I never took before—
  Get me one for old sake's sake.

After that—arrangements make,
  No hotel will take me in,
And a bullock's back would break
  'Neath the teak and leaden skin.
Tonga ropes are frail and thin,
  Or, did I a back-seat take,
In a tonga I might spin,—
  Do your best for old sake's sake.

After that—your work is done.
  Recollect a Padre must
Mourn the dear departed one—
  Throw the ashes and the dust.

Don't go down at once. I trust
  You will find excuse to 'snake
Three days' casual on the bust,'—
  Get your fun for old sake's sake.

I could never stand the Plains.
  Think of blazing June and May,
Think of those September rains
  Yearly till the Judgment Day!
I should never rest in peace,
  I should sweat and lie awake.
Rail me then, on my decease,
  To the Hills for old sake's sake!

## THE OVERLAND MAIL

*Foot-service to the Hills.*

In the name of the Empress of India, make way,
O Lords of the Jungle, wherever you roam,
The woods are astir at the close of the day—
We exiles are waiting for letters from Home.
Let the robber retreat—let the tiger turn tail—
In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!

With a jingle of bells as the dusk gathers in,
He turns to the footpath that heads up the hill—
The bags on his back and a cloth round his chin,
And, tucked in his waistbelt, the Post Office bill;—
'Despatched on this date, as received by the rail,
'*Per* runner, two bags of the Overland Mail.'

Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or swim.
Has the rain wrecked the road? He must climb by the cliff.
Does the tempest cry 'halt'? What are tempests to him?
The service admits not a 'but' or an 'if.'
While the breath's in his mouth, he must bear without fail,
In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail.

From aloe to rose-oak, from rose-oak to fir,
From level to upland, from upland to crest,
From rice-field to rock-ridge, from rock-ridge to spur,
Fly the soft-sandalled feet, strains the brawny, brown chest.
From rail to ravine—to the peak from the vale—
Up, up through the night goes the Overland Mail.

There's a speck on the hillside, a dot on the road—
A jingle of bells on the footpath below—

There 's a scuffle above in the monkey's abode—
The world is awake and the clouds are aglow.
For the great Sun himself must attend to the hail :—
'In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail!'

## DIVIDED DESTINIES

It was an artless *Bandar*, and he danced upon a pine,
And much I wondered how he lived, and where the beast might dine,
And many many other things, till, o'er my morning smoke,
I slept the sleep of idleness and dreamt that *Bandar* spoke.

He said:—'O man of many clothes! Sad crawler on the Hills!
'Observe, I know not Ranken's shop, nor Ranken's monthly bills!
'I take no heed to trousers or the coats that you call dress;
'Nor am I plagued with little cards for little drinks at Mess.

'I steal the bunnia's grain at morn, at noon and eventide
'(For he is fat and I am spare), I roam the mountain-side,
'I follow no man's carriage, and no, never in my life
'Have I flirted at Peliti's with another *Bandar's* wife.

'O man of futile fopperies—unnecessary wraps;
'I own no ponies in the hills, I drive no tall-wheeled traps.
'I buy me not twelve-button gloves, "short-sixes" eke, or rings,
'Nor do I waste at Hamilton's my wealth on "pretty things."

'I quarrel with my wife at home, we never fight abroad;
'But Mrs. B. has grasped the fact I am her only lord.
'I never heard of fever—dumps nor debts depress my soul;
'And I pity and despise you!' Here he pouched my breakfast-roll.

His hide was very mangy and his face was very red,
And ever and anon he scratched with energy his head.
His manners were not always nice, but how my spirit cried
To be an artless *Bandar* loose upon the mountain-side!

So I answered:—'Gentle *Bandar,* an inscrutable Decree,
'Makes thee a gleesome fleasome Thou, and me a wretched Me.
'Go! Depart in peace, my brother, to thy home amid the pine;
'Yet forget not once a mortal wished to change his lot with thine.'

## THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

ARGUMENT.—The Indian Government being minded to discover the economic condition of their lands, sent a Committee to inquire into it; and saw that it was good.

SCENE.—*The wooded heights of Simla. The Incarnation of the Government of India in the raiment of the Angel of Plenty sings, to pianoforte accompaniment:—*

'How sweet is the shepherd's sweet life!
From the dawn to the even he strays—
He shall follow his sheep all the day
And his tongue shall be fillèd with praise.

(*adagio dim.*) Fillèd with praise!'

(*largendo con sp.*) Now this is the position,
Go make an inquisition
Into their real condition
As swiftly as ye may.

(*p*) Ay, paint our swarthy billions
The richest of vermilions
Ere two well-led cotillions
Have danced themselves away.

TURKISH PATROL, *as able and intelligent Investigators wind down the Himalayas :—*

What is the state of the Nation? What is its occupation?
Hi! get along, get along, get along—lend us the information!

(*dim.*) Census the *byle* and the *yabu*—capture a first-class Babu,
Set him to cut Gazetteers—Gazetteers . . .
(*ff*) What is the state of the Nation, etc. etc.

INTERLUDE, *from Nowhere in Particular, to stringed and Oriental instruments.*

Our cattle reel beneath the yoke they bear—
The earth is iron and the skies are brass -

And faint with fervour of the flaming air
  The languid hours pass.

The well is dry beneath the village tree—
  The young wheat withers ere it reach a span,
And belts of blinding sand show cruelly
  Where once the river ran.

Pray, brothers, pray, but to no earthly King—
  Lift up your hands above the blighted grain,
Look westward—if they please, the Gods shall bring
  Their mercy with the rain.

Look westward—bears the blue no brown cloud-bank?
  Nay, it is written—wherefore should we fly?
On our own field and by our cattle's flank
  Lie down, lie down to die!

SEMI-CHORUS.

By the plumed heads of Kings
Waving high,
Where the tall corn springs
O'er the dead.
If they rust or rot we die,
If they ripen we are fed.
Very mighty is the power of our Kings!

*Triumphal return to Simla of the Investigators, attired after the manner of Dionysus, leading a pet tiger-cub in wreaths of rhubarb leaves, symbolical of India under medical treatment. They sing:—*

We have seen, we have written—behold it, the proof of our manifold toil!
In their hosts they assembled and told it—the tale of the Sons of the Soil.

We have said of the Sickness—'Where is it?'—and of Death—'It is far from our ken,'—
We have paid a particular visit to the affluent children of men.
We have trodden the mart and the well-curb—we have stooped to the bield and the byre;
And the King may the forces of Hell curb for the People have all they desire!

*Castanets and step-dance:—*

Oh, the *dom* and the *mag* and the *thakur* and the *thag*,
And the *nat* and the *brinjaree*,
And the *bunnia* and the *ryot* are as happy and as quiet
And as plump as they can be!
Yes, the *jain* and the *jat* in his stucco-fronted hut,
And the bounding *bazugar*,
By the favour of the King, are as fat as anything,
They are—they are—they are!

RECITATIVE, *Government of India, with white satin wings and electro-plated harp :—*

How beautiful upon the mountains—in peace reclining,
Thus to be assured that our people are unanimously dining.
And though there are places not so blessed as others in natural advantages, which, after all, was only to be expected,
Proud and glad are we to congratulate you upon the work you have thus ably effected.
(*Cres.*) How be-ewtiful upon the mountains!

HIRED BAND, *brasses only, full chorus :—*

God bless the Squire
And all his rich relations
Who teach us poor people
We eat our proper rations—
We eat our proper rations,
In spite of inundations,

Malarial exhalations,
And casual starvations,
We have, we have, they say we have—
We *have* our proper rations!

CHORUS OF THE CRYSTALLISED FACTS.

Before the beginning of years
There came to the rule of the State
Men with a pair of shears,
Men with an Estimate—
Strachey with Muir for leaven,
Lytton with locks that fell,
Ripon fooling with Heaven,
And Temple riding like H—ll!
And the bigots took in hand
Cess and the falling of rain,
And the measure of sifted sand
The dealer puts in the grain—
Imports by land and sea,
To uttermost decimal worth,
And registration—free—
In the houses of death and of birth

And fashioned with pens and paper,
And fashioned in black and white,
With Life for a flickering taper
And Death for a blazing light—
With the Armed and the Civil Power,
That his strength might endure for a span,
From Adam's Bridge to Peshawur,
The Much Administered Man.

In the towns of the North and the East,
They gathered as unto rule,
They bade him starve the priest
And send his children to school.
Railways and roads they wrought,
For the needs of the soil within;
A time to squabble in court,
A time to bear and to grin.
And gave him peace in his ways,
Jails—and Police to fight,
Justice at length of days,
And Right—and Might in the Right.
His speech is of mortgaged bedding,
On his kine he borrows yet,

At his heart is his daughter's wedding
In his eye foreknowledge of debt.
He eats and hath indigestion,
He toils and he may not stop;
His life is a long-drawn question
Between a crop and a crop.

## THE MARE'S NEST

Jane Austen Beecher Stowe de Rouse
  Was good beyond all earthly need;
But, on the other hand, her spouse
  Was very, very bad indeed.
He smoked cigars, called churches slow,
And raced—but this she did not know.

For Belial Machiavelli kept
  The little fact a secret, and,
Though o'er his minor sins she wept,
  Jane Austen did not understand
That Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Absorbed one-half her husband's pay.

She was so good she made him worse
  (Some women are like this, I think);
He taught her parrot how to curse,
  Her Assam monkey how to drink.

He vexed her righteous soul until
She went up, and he went down hill.

Then came the crisis, strange to say,
  Which turned a good wife to a better.
A telegraphic peon, one day,
  Brought her—now, had it been a letter
For Belial Machiavelli, I
Know Jane would just have let it lie.

But 'twas a telegram instead,
  Marked 'urgent,' and her duty plain
To open it. Jane Austen read:—
  'Your Lilly's got a cough again.
'Can't understand why she is kept
'At your expense.' Jane Austen wept.

It was a misdirected wire,
  Her husband was at Shaitanpore.
She spread her anger, hot as fire,
  Through six thin foreign sheets or more,
Sent off that letter, wrote another
To her solicitor—and mother.

Then Belial Machiavelli saw
  Her error and, I trust, his own,
Wired to the minion of the Law,
  And travelled wifeward—not alone.
For Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Came in a horse-box all the way.

There was a scene—a weep or two—
  With many kisses. Austen Jane
Rode Lilly all the season through,
  And never opened wires again.
She races now with Belial. This
Is very sad, but so it is.

## THE BALLAD OF FISHER'S BOARDING-HOUSE

That night, when through the mooring-chains
  The wide-eyed corpse rolled free,
To blunder down by Garden Reach
  And rot at Kedgeree,
The tale the Hughli told the shoal
  The lean shoal told to me.

'Twas Fultah Fisher's boarding-house,
  Where sailor-men reside,
And there were men of all the ports
  From Mississip to Clyde,
And regally they spat and smoked,
  And fearsomely they lied.

They lied about the purple Sea
  That gave them scanty bread,
They lied about the Earth beneath,
  The Heavens overhead,
For they had looked too often on
  Black rum when that was red.

They told their tales of wreck and wrong,
  Of shame and lust and fraud,
They backed their toughest statements with
  The Brimstone of the Lord,
And crackling oaths went to and fro
  Across the fist-banged board.

And there was Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
  Bull-throated, bare of arm,
Who carried on his hairy chest
  The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
  That keeps a man from harm.

And there was Jake Without-the-Ears,
  And Pamba the Malay,
And Carboy Gin the Guinea cook,
  And Luz from Vigo Bay,
And Honest Jack who sold them slops
  And harvested their pay.

And there was Salem Hardicker,
  A lean Bostonian he—

Russ, German, English, Halfbreed, Finn,
  Yank, Dane, and Portuguee,
At Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
  They rested from the sea.

Now Anne of Austria shared their drinks,
  Collinga knew her fame,
From Tarnau in Galicia
  To Jaun Bazaar she came,
To eat the bread of infamy
  And take the wage of shame.

She held a dozen men to heel—
  Rich spoil of war was hers,
In hose and gown and ring and chain,
  From twenty mariners,
And, by Port Law, that week, men called
  Her Salem Hardieker's.

But seamen learnt—what landsmen know—
  That neither gifts nor gain
Can hold a winking Light o' Love
  Or Fancy's flight restrain,

When Anne of Austria rolled her eyes
  On Hans the blue-eyed Dane.

Since Life is strife, and strife means knife,
  From Howrah to the Bay,
And he may die before the dawn
  Who liquored out the day,
In Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
  We woo while yet we may.

But cold was Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
  Bull-throated, bare of arm,
And laughter shook the chest beneath
  The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
  That keeps a man from harm.

'You speak to Salem Hardicker;
  'You was his girl, I know.
'I ship mineselfs to-morrow, see
  'Und round the Skaw we go,
'South, down the Cattegat, by Hjelm,
  'To Besser in Saro.'

When love rejected turns to hate,
  All ill betide the man.
'You speak to Salem Hardieker'—
  She spoke as woman can.
A scream—a sob—'He called me—names!'
  And then the fray began.

An oath from Salem Hardieker,
  A shriek upon the stairs,
A dance of shadows on the wall,
  A knife-thrust unawares—
And Hans came down, as cattle drop,
  Across the broken chairs.

*  *  *  *

In Anne of Austria's trembling hands
  The weary head fell low:—
'I ship mineselfs to-morrow, straight
  'For Besser in Saro;
'Und there Ultruda comes to me
  'At Easter, und I go

'South, down the Cattegat—What's here?
  'There—are—no—lights—to—guide!'

The mutter ceased, the spirit passed,
  And Anne of Austria cried
In Fultah Fisher's boarding-house
  When Hans the mighty died.

Thus slew they Hans the blue-eyed Dane,
  Bull-throated, bare of arm,
But Anne of Austria looted first
  The maid Ultruda's charm—
The little silver crucifix
  That keeps a man from harm.

## POSSIBILITIES

Ay, lay him 'neath the Simla pine—
  A fortnight fully to be missed,
  Behold, we lose our fourth at whist,
A chair is vacant where we dine.

His place forgets him; other men
  Have bought his ponies, guns, and traps.
  His fortune is the Great Perhaps
And that cool rest-house down the glen,

Whence he shall hear, as spirits may,
  Our mundane revel on the height,
  Shall watch each flashing *'rickshaw*-light
Sweep on to dinner, dance, and play.

Benmore shall woo him to the ball
  With lighted rooms and braying band;
  And he shall hear and understand
*'Dream Faces'* better than us all.

For, think you, as the vapours flee
  Across Sanjaolie after rain,
  His soul may climb the hill again
To each old field of victory.

Unseen, who women held so dear,
  The strong man's yearning to his kind
  Shall shake at most the window-blind,
Or dull awhile the card-room's cheer.

In his own place of power unknown,
  His Light o' Love another's flame,
  His dearest pony galloped lame,
And he an alien and alone.

Yet may he meet with many a friend—
  Shrewd shadows, lingering long unseen
  Among us when '*God save the Queen*'
Shows even 'extras' have an end.

And, when we leave the heated room,
  And, when at four the lights expire,
  The crew shall gather round the fire
And mock our laughter in the gloom;

Legislative

Talk as we talked, and they ere death—
First wanly, dance in ghostly wise,
With ghosts of tunes for melodies,
And vanish at the morning's breath.

## ARITHMETIC ON THE FRONTIER

A GREAT and glorious thing it is
  To learn, for seven years or so,
The Lord knows what of that and this,
  Ere reckoned fit to face the foe—
The flying bullet down the Pass,
That whistles clear: 'All flesh is grass.'

Three hundred pounds per annum spent
  On making brain and body meeter
For all the murderous intent
  Comprised in 'villainous saltpetre!'
And after—ask the Yusufzaies
What comes of all our 'ologies

A scrimmage in a Border Station—
  A canter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
  Drops to a ten-rupee *jezail*—
The Crammer's boast, the Squadron's pride,
Shot like a rabbit in a ride!

No proposition Euclid wrote,
  No formulæ the text-books know,
Will turn the bullet from your coat,
  Or ward the tulwar's downward blow.
Strike hard who cares—shoot straight who can—
The odds are on the cheaper man.

One sword-knot stolen from the camp
  Will pay for all the school expenses
Of any Kurrum Valley scamp
  Who knows no word or moods and tenses,
But, being blessed with perfect sight,
Picks off our messmates left and right.

With home-bred hordes the hillsides teem,
  The troopships bring us one by one,
At vast expense of time and steam,
  To slay Afridis where they run.
The 'captives of our bow and spear'
Are cheap, alas! as we are dear.

## THE SONG OF THE WOMEN

(Lady Dufferin's Fund for medical aid to the Women of India.)

How shall she know the worship we would do her?
  The walls are high and she is very far.
How shall the women's message reach unto her
  Above the tumult of the packed bazaar?
    Free wind of March against the lattice blowing,
    Bear thou our thanks lest she depart unknowing.

Go forth across the fields we may not roam in,
  Go forth beyond the trees that rim the city
To whatsoe'er fair place she hath her home in,
  Who dowered us with wealth of love and pity.
    Out of our shadow pass and seek her singing—
    'I have no gifts but Love alone for bringing.'

Say that we be a feeble folk who greet her,
  But old in grief, and very wise in tears:
Say that we, being desolate, entreat her
  That she forget us not in after years;
    For we have seen the light and it were grievous
    To dim that dawning if our Lady leave us.

By Life that ebbed with none to stanch the failing,
  By Love's sad harvest garnered in the spring,
When Love in Ignorance wept unavailing
  O'er young buds dead before their blossoming;
    By all the grey owl watched, the pale moon viewed,
    In past grim years declare our gratitude!

By hands uplifted to the Gods that heard not,
  By gifts that found no favour in their sight,
By faces bent above the babe that stirred not,
  By nameless horrors of the stifling night;
    By ills fordone, by peace her toils discover,
    Bid Earth be good beneath and Heaven above her!

If she have sent her servants in our pain,
  If she have fought with Death and dulled his sword;
If she have given back our sick again,
  And to the breast the weakling lips restored,
    Is it a little thing that she has wrought?
    Then Life and Death and Motherhood be nought.

Go forth, O Wind, our message on thy wings,
  And they shall hear thee pass and bid thee speed,
In reed-roofed hut, or white-walled home of kings,
  Who have been holpen by her in their need.
    All spring shall give thee fragrance, and the wheat
    Shall be a tasselled floorcloth to thy feet.

Haste, for our hearts are with thee, take no rest!
  Loud-voiced ambassador, from sea to sea
Proclaim the blessing, manifold, confest,
  Of those in darkness by her hand set free,
    Then very softly to her presence move,
    And whisper: 'Lady, lo, they know and love!'

## THE BETROTHED

'You must choose between me and your cigar.'

OPEN the old cigar-box, get me a Cuba stout,
For things are running crossways, and Maggie and
I are out.

We quarrelled about Havanas—we fought o'er a
good cheroot,
And I know she is exacting, and she says I am
a brute.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a space;
In the soft blue veil of the vapour musing on
Maggie's face.

Maggie is pretty to look at—Maggie's a loving
lass,
But the prettiest cheeks must wrinkle, the truest
of loves must pass.

There 's peace in a Laranaga, there 's calm in a
Henry Clay,
But the best cigar in an hour is finished and thrown
away—

Thrown away for another as perfect and ripe and
brown—
But I could not throw away Maggie for fear o' the
talk o' the town!

Maggie, my wife at fifty—grey and dour and
old—
With never another Maggie to purchase for love
or gold!

And the light of Days that have Been the dark of
the Days that Are,
And Love's torch stinking and stale, like the butt
of a dead cigar—

The butt of a dead cigar you are bound to keep in
your pocket—
With never a new one to light tho' it's charred
and black to the socket.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a while—
Here is a mild Manilla—there is a wifely smile.

Which is the better portion—bondage bought with a ring,
Or a harem of dusky beauties fifty tied in a string?

Counsellors cunning and silent—comforters true and tried,
And never a one of the fifty to sneer at a rival bride?

Thought in the early morning, solace in time of woes,
Peace in the hush of the twilight, balm ere my eyelids close,

This will the fifty give me, asking nought in return,
With only a *Suttee's* passion—to do their duty and burn.

This will the fifty give me. When they are spent and dead,
Five times other fifties shall be my servants instead.

The furrows of far-off Java, the isles of the Spanish Main,
When they hear that my harem is empty will send me my brides again.

I will take no heed to their raiment, nor food for their mouths withal,
So long as the gulls are nesting, so long as the showers fall.

I will scent 'em with best Vanilla, with tea will I temper their hides,
And the Moor and the Mormon shall envy who read of the tale of my brides.

For Maggie has written a letter to give me my choice between
The wee little whimpering Love and the great god Nick o' Teen.

And I have been servant of Love for barely a
twelvemonth clear,
But I have been Priest of Partagas a matter of
seven year;

And the gloom of my bachelor days is flecked with
the cheery light
Of stumps that I burned to Friendship and Pleasure
and Work and Fight.

And I turn my eyes to the future that Maggie and
I must prove,
But the only light on the marshes is the Will-o'-
the-Wisp of Love.

Will it see me safe through my journey or leave me
bogged in the mire?
Since a puff of tobacco can cloud it, shall I follow
the fitful fire?

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider anew—
Old friends, and who is Maggie that I should
abandon *you*?

A million surplus Maggies are willing to bear the yoke;
And a woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a Smoke.

Light me another Cuba—I hold to my first-sworn vows,
If Maggie will have no rival, I'll have no Maggie for Spouse!

## A BALLADE OF JAKKO HILL

One moment bid the horses wait,
  Since tiffin is not laid till three,
Below the upward path and strait
  You climbed a year ago with me.
Love came upon us suddenly
  And loosed—an idle hour to kill—
A headless, harmless armoury
  That smote us both on Jakko Hill.

Ah Heaven! we would wait and wait
  Through Time and to Eternity!
Ah Heaven! we would conquer Fate
  With more than Godlike constancy!
I cut the date upon a tree—
  Here stands the clumsy figures still:—
'10-7-85, A.D.'
  Damp in the mist on Jakko Hill.

What came of high resolve and great,
  And until Death fidelity?
Whose horse is waiting at your gate?
  Whose *'rickshaw*-wheels ride over me?
No Saint's, I swear; and—let me see
  To-night what names your programme fill—
We drift asunder merrily,
  As drifts the mist on Jakko Hill!

L'Envoi.

Princess, behold our ancient state
  Has clean departed; and we see
'Twas Idleness we took for Fate
  That bound light bonds on you and me.
Amen! Here ends the comedy
  Where it began in all good will,
Since Love and Leave together flee
  As driven mist on Jakko Hill!

## THE PLEA OF THE SIMLA DANCERS

Too late, alas! the song
To remedy the wrong;—
The rooms are taken from us, swept and garnished for their fate,
But these tear-besprinkled pages
Shall attest to future ages
That we cried against the crime of it—too late, alas! too late!

'WHAT have *we* ever done to bear this grudge?'
Was there no room save only in Benmore
For docket, *duftar*, and for office drudge,
That you usurp our smoothest dancing floor?
Must babus do their work on polished teak?
Are ballrooms fittest for the ink you spill?
Was there no other cheaper house to seek?
You might have left them all at Strawberry Hill.

We never harmed you! Innocent our guise,
Dainty our shining feet, our voices low;
And we revolved to divers melodies,
And we were happy but a year ago.

To-night, the moon that watched our lightsome
wiles—
That beamed upon us through the deodars—
Is wan with gazing on official files,
And desecrating desks disgust the stars.

Nay! by the memory of tuneful nights—
Nay! by the witchery of flying feet—
Nay! by the glamour of fordone delights—
By all things merry, musical, and meet—
By wine that sparkled, and by sparkling eyes—
By wailing waltz—by reckless gallop's strain—
By dim verandahs and by soft replies,
Give us our ravished ballroom back again

Or—hearken to the curse we lay on you!
The ghosts of waltzes shall perplex your brain,
And murmurs of past merriment pursue
Your 'wildered clerks that they indite in vain;
And when you count your poor Provincial millions,
The only figures that your pen shall frame
Shall be the figures of dear, dear cotillons
Danced out in tumult long before you came.

Yea! '*See Saw*' shall upset your estimates,
  '*Dreamfaces*' shall your heavy heads bemuse.
Because your hand, unheeding, desecrates
  Our temple fit for higher, worthier use.
And all the long verandahs, eloquent
  With echoes of a score of Simla years,
Shall plague you with unbidden sentiment—
  Babbling of kisses, laughter, love, and tears.

So shall you mazed amid old memories stand,
  So shall you toil, and shall accomplish naught.
And ever in your ears a phantom Band
  Shall blare away the staid official thought.
Wherefore—and ere this awful curse be spoken,
  Cast out your swarthy sacrilegious train,
And give — ere dancing cease and hearts be broken—
  Give us our ravished ballroom back again!

## 'AS THE BELL CLINKS'

As I left the Halls at Lumley, rose the vision of a comely
Maid last season worshipped dumbly, watched with fervour from afar;
And I wondered idly, blindly, if the maid would greet me kindly.
That was all—the rest was settled by the clinking tonga-bar.
Yea, my life and hers were coupled by the tonga coupling-bar.

For my misty meditation, at the second changing station,
Suffered sudden dislocation, fled before the tuneless jar
Of a Wagner *obbligato*, *scherzo*, double-hand *staccato*,

Played on either pony's saddle by the clacking
tonga-bar—
Played with human speech, I fancied, by the jigging,
jolting bar.

'She was sweet,' thought I, 'last season, but 'twere
surely wild unreason
'Such a tiny hope to freeze on as was offered by
my Star,
'When she whispered, something sadly: "I—we
feel your going badly!"'
'*And you let the chance escape you?*' rapped the
rattling tonga-bar.
'*What a chance and what an idiot!*' clicked the
vicious tonga-bar.

Heart of man—O heart of putty! Had I gone by
Kakahutti,
On the old Hill-road and rutty, I had 'scaped that
fatal car.
But his fortune each must bide by, so I watched the
milestones slide by

To—'*You call on Her to-morrow!*' fugue with cymbals by the bar—
'*You must call on Her to-morrow!*'—post-horn gallop by the bar.

Yet a further stage my goal on—we were whirling down to Solon,
With a double lurch and roll on, best foot foremost, *ganz und gar*—
'She was *very* sweet,' I hinted. 'If a kiss had been imprinted ——?'
'*Would ha' saved a world of trouble!*' clashed the busy tonga-bar.
''*Been accepted or rejected!*' banged and clanged the tonga-bar.

Then a notion wild and daring, 'spite the incom tax's paring
And a hasty thought of sharing—less than many incomes are—
Made me put a question private, you can guess what I would drive at.

'*You must work the sum to prove it,*' clanked the careless tonga-bar.

'*Simple Rule of Two will prove it,*' lilted back the tonga-bar.

It was under Khyraghaut I mused:—'Suppose the maid be haughty—

'There are lovers rich—and forty—wait some wealthy Avatar?

'Answer, monitor untiring, 'twixt the ponies twain perspiring!'

'*Faint heart never won fair lady,*' creaked the straining tonga-bar.

'*Can I tell you ere you ask Her?*' pounded slow the tonga-bar.

Last, the Tara Devi turning showed the lights of Simla burning,

Lit my little lazy yearning to a fiercer flame by far.

As below the Mall we jingled, through my very heart it tingled—

Did the iterated order of the threshing tonga-bar :—

'*Try your luck—you can't do better!*' twanged the loosened tonga-bar.

## CHRISTMAS IN INDIA

Dim dawn behind the tamarisks—the sky is saffron-yellow—
As the women in the village grind the corn,
And the parrots seek the river-side, each calling to his fellow
That the Day, the staring Eastern Day, is born.
O the white dust on the highway! O the stenches in the byway!
O the clammy fog that hovers over earth!
And at Home they're making merry 'neath the white and scarlet berry—
What part have India's exiles in their mirth?

Full day behind the tamarisks—the sky is blue and staring—
As the cattle crawl afield beneath the yoke,

And they bear One o'er the field-path, who is past all hope or caring,
To the ghât below the curling wreaths of smoke.
Call on Rama, going slowly, as ye bear a brother lowly—
Call on Rama—he may hear, perhaps, your voice!
With our hymn-books and our psalters we appeal to other altars,
And to-day we bid 'good Christian men rejoice!'

High noon behind the tamarisks—the sun is hot above us—
As at Home the Christmas Day is breaking wan.
They will drink our healths at dinner—those who tell us how they love us,
And forget us till another year be gone!
O the toil that knows no breaking! O the *heimweh*, ceaseless, aching!
O the black dividing Sea and alien Plain!

Youth was cheap—wherefore we sold it. Gold
was good—we hoped to hold it,
And to-day we know the fulness of our
gain.

Grey dusk behind the tamarisks—the parrots fly
together—
As the Sun is sinking slowly over Home;
And his last ray seems to mock us shackled in a
lifelong tether
That drags us back howe'er so far we roam.
Hard her service, poor her payment—she in
ancient, tattered raiment—
India, she the grim Stepmother of our
kind.
If a year of life be lent her, if her temple's
shrine we enter,
The door is shut—we may not look behind.

Black night behind the tamarisks—the owls begin
their chorus—
As the conches from the temple scream and
bray.

With the fruitless years behind us and the hopeless
years before us,
Let us honour, O my brothers, Christmas
Day!
Call a truce, then, to our labours—let us feast
with friends and neighbours,
And be merry as the custom of our
caste;
For, if 'faint and forced the laughter,' and
if sadness follow after,
We are richer by one mocking Christmas
past.

## THE GRAVE OF THE HUNDRED HEAD

*There's a widow in sleepy Chester*
*Who weeps for her only son;*
*There's a grave on the Pabeng River,*
*A grave that the Burmans shun,*
*And there's Subadar Prag Tewarri*
*Who tells how the work was done.*

A Snider squibbed in the jungle—
Somebody laughed and fled,
And the men of the First Shikaris
Picked up their Subaltern dead,
With a big blue mark in his forehead
And the back blown out of his head.

Subadar Prag Tewarri,
Jemadar Hira Lal,
Took command of the party,
Twenty rifles in all,
Marched them down to the river
As the day was beginning to fall.

They buried the boy by the river,
  A blanket over his face—
They wept for their dead Lieutenant,
  The men of an alien race—
They made a *samádh* in his honour,
  A mark for his resting-place.

For they swore by the Holy Water,
  They swore by the salt they ate,
That the soul of Lieutenant Eshmitt Sahib
  Should go to his God in state;
With fifty file of Burman
  To open him Heaven's gate.

The men of the First Shikaris
  Marched till the break of day,
Till they came to the rebel village,
  The village of Pabengmay—
A *jingal* covered the clearing,
  Calthrops hampered the way.

Subadar Prag Tewarri,
  Bidding them load with ball,

Halted a dozen rifles
  Under the village wall;
Sent out a flanking-party
  With Jemadar Hira Lal.

The men of the First Shikaris
  Shouted and smote and slew
Turning the grinning *jingal*
  On to the howling crew.
The Jemadar's flanking-party
  Butchered the folk who flew.

Long was the morn of slaughter,
  Long was the list of slain,
Five score heads were taken,
  Five score heads and twain;
And the men of the First Shikaris
  Went back to their grave again,

Each man bearing a basket
  Red as his palms that day,
Red as the blazing village—
  The village of Pabengmay.
And the '*drip-drip-drip*' from the baskets
  Reddened the grass by the way.

They made a pile of their trophies
  High as a tall man's chin,
Head upon head distorted,
  Set in a sightless grin,
Anger and pain and terror
  Stamped on the smoke-scorched skin.

Subadar Prag Tewarri
  Put the head of the Boh
On the top of the mound of triumph,
  The head of his son below,
With the sword and the peacock-banner
  That the world might behold and know.

Thus the *samádh* was perfect,
  Thus was the lesson plain
Of the wrath of the First Shikaris—
  The price of a white man slain;
And the men of the First Shikaris
  Went back into camp again.

Then a silence came to the river,
  A hush fell over the shore,

And Bohs that were brave departed,
  And Sniders squibbed no more;
    For the Burmans said
    That a *kullah's* head
Must be paid for with heads five score.

*There's a widow in sleepy Chester*
  *Who weeps for her only son;*
*There's a grave on the Pabeng River,*
  *A grave that the Burmans shun,*
*And there's Subadar Prag Tewarri*
  *Who tells how the work was done.*

## AN OLD SONG

So long as 'neath the Kalka hills
  The tonga-horn shall ring,
So long as down the Solon dip
  The hard-held ponies swing,
So long as Tara Devi sees
  The lights o' Simla town,
So long as Pleasure calls us up,
  And Duty drives us down,
    *If you love me as I love you*
    *What pair so happy as we two?*

So long as Aces take the King,
  Or backers take the bet,
So long as debt leads men to wed,
  Or marriage leads to debt,
So long as little luncheons, Love,
  And scandal hold their vogue,

While there is sport at Annandale
  Or whisky at Jutogh,
    *If you love me as I love you*
    *What knife can cut our love in two?*

So long as down the rocking floor
  The raving polka spins,
So long as Kitchen Lancers spur
  The maddened violins,
So long as through the whirling smoke
  We hear the oft-told tale—
'Twelve hundred in the Lotteries,'
  And *Whatshername* for sale?
    *If you love me as I love you*
    *We'll play the game and win it too.*

So long as Lust or Lucre tempt
  Straight riders from the course,
So long as with each drink we pour
  Black brewage of Remorse,
So long as those unloaded guns
  We keep beside the bed,

Blow off, by obvious accident,
  The lucky owner's head,
    *If you love me as I love you*
    *What can Life kill or Death undo?*

So long as Death 'twixt dance and dance
  Chills best and bravest blood,
And drops the reckless rider down
  The rotten, rain-soaked *khud*,
So long as rumours from the North
  Make loving wives afraid,
So long as Burma takes the boy
  And typhoid kills the maid,
    *If you love me as I love you*
    *What knife can cut our love in two?*

By all that lights our daily life
  Or works our lifelong woe,
From Boileaugunge to Simla Downs
  And those grim glades below,
Where heedless of the flying hoof
  And clamour overhead,

Sleep, with the grey langur for guard
  Our very scornful Dead,
    *If you love me as I love you*
    *All Earth is servant to us two!*

By Docket, Billetdoux, and File,
  By Mountain, Cliff, and Fir,
By Fan and Sword and Office-box,
  By Corset, Plume, and Spur,
By Riot, Revel, Waltz, and War,
  By Women, Work, and Bills,
By all the life that fizzes in
  The everlasting Hills,
    *If you love me as I love you*
    *What pair so happy as we two?*

## CERTAIN MAXIMS OF HAFIZ

I

If It be pleasant to look on, stalled in the packed *serai*,
Does not the Young Man try Its temper and pace ere he buy?
If She be pleasant to look on, what does the Young Man say?
'Lo! She is pleasant to look on, give Her to me to-day!'

II

Yea, though a Kafir die, to him is remitted Jehannum
If he borrowed in life from a native at sixty per cent. per annum.

III

Blister we not for *bursati*? So when the heart is vext,
The pain of one maiden's refusal is drowned in the pain of the next.

IV

The temper of chums, the love of your wife, and a new piano's tune—
Which of the three will you trust at the end of an Indian June?

V

Who are the rulers of Ind—to whom shall we bow the knee?
Make your peace with the women, and men will make you L. G.

VI

Does the woodpecker flit round the young *ferash*? Does grass clothe a new-built wall?
Is she under thirty, the woman who holds a boy in her thrall?

VII

If She grow suddenly gracious—reflect. Is it all for thee?
The blackbuck is stalked through the bullock, and Man through jealousy.

VIII

Seek not for favour of women. So shall you find it indeed.
Does not the boar break cover just when you 're lighting a weed?

IX

If He play, being young and unskilful, for shekels of silver and gold,
Take His money, my son, praising Allah. The kid was ordained to be sold.

X

With a 'weed' among men or horses verily this is the best,
That you work him in office or dog-cart lightly—but give him no rest.

XI

Pleasant the snaffle of Courtship, improving the manners and carriage;
But the colt who is wise will abstain from the terrible thorn-bit of Marriage.

XII

As the thriftless gold of the *babul* so is the gold that we spend
On a Derby Sweep, or our neighbour's wife, or the horse that we buy from a friend.

XIII

The ways of man with a maid be strange, yet simple and tame
To the ways of a man with a horse, when selling or racing that same.

XIV

In public Her face turneth to thee, and pleasant Her smile when ye meet.
It is ill. The cold rocks of El-Gidar smile thus on the waves at their feet.
In public Her face is averted, with anger She nameth thy name.
It is well. Was there ever a loser content with the loss of the game?

XV

If She have spoken a word, remember thy lips are sealed,
And the Brand of the Dog is upon him by whom is the secret revealed.
If She have written a letter, delay not an instant but burn it.
Tear it in pieces, O Fool, and the wind to her mate shall return it!
If there be trouble to Herward, and a lie of the blackest can clear,
Lie, while thy lips can move or a man is alive to hear.

XVI

My Son, if a maiden deny thee and scufflingly bid thee give o'er,
Yet lip meets with lip at the lastward—get out! She has been there before.
They are pecked on the ear and the chin and the nose who are lacking in lore.

XVII

If we fall in the race, though we win, the hoofslide is scarred on the course.
Though Allah and Earth pardon Sin, remaineth for ever Remorse.

XVIII

'By all I am misunderstood!' if the Matron shall say, or the Maid:—
'Alas! I do not understand,' my son, be thou nowise afraid.
In vain in the sight of the Bird is the net of the Fowler displayed.

XIX

My son, if I, Hafiz, thy father, take hold of thy knees in my pain,
Demanding thy name on stamped paper, one day or one hour—refrain.
Are the links of thy fetters so light that thou cravest another man's chain?

## THE MOON OF OTHER DAYS

Beneath the deep verandah's shade,
  When bats begin to fly,
I sit me down and watch—alas!
  Another evening die.
Blood-red behind the sere *ferash*
  She rises through the haze.
Sainted Diana! can that be
  The Moon of Other Days!

Ah! shade of little Kitty Smith,
  Sweet Saint of Kensington!
Say, was it ever thus at Home
  The Moon of August shone,
When arm in arm we wandered long
  Through Putney's evening haze,
And Hammersmith was Heaven beneath
  The Moon of Other Days?

But Wandle's stream is Sutlej now,
  And Putney's evening haze
The dust that half a hundred kine
  Before my window raise.
Unkempt, unclean, athwart the mist
  The seething city looms,
In place of Putney's golden gorse
  The sickly *babul* blooms.

Glare down, old Hecate, through the dust,
  And bid the pie-dog yell,
Draw from the drain its typhoid germ,
  From each bazaar its smell;
Yea, suck the fever from the tank
  And sap my strength therewith:
Thank Heaven, you show a smiling face
  To little Kitty Smith!

## THE FALL OF JOCK GILLESPIE

THIS fell when dinner-time was done—
  'Twixt the first an' the second rub—
That oor mon Jock cam' hame again
  To his rooms ahint the Club.

An' syne he laughed, an' syne he sang,
  An' syne we thocht him fou,
An' syne he trumped his partner's trick,
  An' garred his partner rue.

Then up and spake an elder mon,
  That held the Spade its Ace—
'God save the lad! Whence comes the licht
  'That wimples on his face?'

An' Jock he sniggered, an' Jock he smiled,
  An' ower the card-brim wunk:—
'I 'm a' too fresh fra' the stirrup peg,
  'May be that I am drunk.'

'There 's whusky brewed in Galashiels
'An' L. L. L. forbye ;
'But never liquor lit the lowe
'That keeks fra' oot your eye.

'There 's a thrid o' hair on your dress-coat breast,
'Aboon the heart a wee ?'
'Oh ! that is fra' the lang-haired Skye
'That slobbers ower me.'

Oh ! lang-haired Skyes are lovin' beasts,
'An' terrier dogs are fair,
'But never yet was terrier born,
'Wi' ell-lang gowden hair !

'There 's a smirch o' pouther on your breast,
'Below the left lappel ?'
'Oh ! that is fra' my auld cigar,
'Whenas the stump-end fell.'

'Mon, Jock, ye smoke the Trichi coarse,
'For ye are short o' cash,
'An' best Havanas couldna leave
'Sae white an' pure an ash.

'This nicht ye stopped a story braid,
'An' stopped it wi' a curse—
'Last nicht ye told that tale yoursel',
'An' capped it wi' a worse!

'Oh! we're no fou! Oh! we're no fou!
'But plainly we can ken
'Ye're fallin', fallin' fra the band
'O' cantie single men!'

An' it fell when *sirris*-shaws were sere,
An' the nichts were lang and mirk,
In braw new breeks, wi' a gowden ring,
Oor Jockie gaed to the Kirk.

## WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

### June 21st, 1887

By the well, where the bullocks go
Silent and blind and slow—
By the field, where the young corn dies
In the face of the sultry skies,
They have heard, as the dull Earth hears
The voice of the wind of an hour,
The sound of the Great Queen's voice:—
'My God hath given me years,
'Hath granted dominion and power:
'And I bid you, O Land, rejoice.'

And the Ploughman settles the share
More deep in the grudging clod;
For he saith:—'The wheat is my care,
'And the rest is the will of God.

'He sent the Mahratta spear
'As He sendeth the rain,
'And the *Mlech*, in the fated year,
'Broke the spear in twain,
'And was broken in turn. Who knows
'How our Lords make strife?
'It is good that the young wheat grows,
'For the bread is Life.'

Then, far and near, as the twilight drew,
  Hissed up to the scornful dark
Great serpents, blazing, of red and blue,
That rose and faded, and rose anew,
  That the Land might wonder and mark.
'To-day is a day of days,' they said,
'Make merry, O People, all!'
And the Ploughman listened and bowed his
    head:—
'To-day and to-morrow God's will,' he said,
As he trimmed the lamps on the wall.

'He sendeth us years that are good,
'As He sendeth the dearth.

'He giveth to each man his food,
'Or Her food to the Earth.
'Our Kings and our Queens are afar—
'On their peoples be peace—
'God bringeth the rain to the Bar,
'That our cattle increase.'

And the Ploughman settled the share
More deep in the sun-dried clod:—
'Mogul, Mahratta, and *Mlech* from the North,
'And White Queen over the Seas—
'God raiseth them up and driveth them forth
'As the dust of the ploughshare flies in the breeze;
'But the wheat and the cattle are all my care,
'And the rest is the will of God.'

## THE UNDERTAKER'S HORSE

'To-tschin-shu is condemned to death. How can he drink tea with the Executioner?'—*Japanese Proverb.*

THE eldest son bestrides him,
And the pretty daughter rides him,
And I meet him oft o' mornings on the Course;
And there wakens in my bosom
An emotion chill and gruesome
As I canter past the Undertaker's Horse.

Neither shies he nor is restive,
But a hideously suggestive
Trot, professional and placid, he affects;
And the cadence of his hoof-beats
To my mind this grim reproof beats:—
'Mend your pace, my friend, I 'm coming. Who's
the next?'

Ah! stud-bred of ill-omen,
I have watched the strongest go—men
Of pith and might and muscle—at your heels,
Down the plantain-bordered highway,
(Heaven send it ne'er be my way!)
In a lacquered box and jetty upon wheels.

Answer, sombre beast and dreary,
Where is Brown, the young, the cheery.
Smith, the pride of all his friends and half the
Force?
You were at that last dread *dak*
We must cover at a walk,
Bring them back to me, O Undertaker's Horse!

With your mane unhogged and flowing,
And your curious way of going,
And that businesslike black crimping of your
tail,
E'en with Beauty on your back, Sir,
Pacing as a lady's hack, Sir,
What wonder when I meet you I turn pale?

It may be you wait your time, Beast,
Till I write my last bad rhyme, Beast—
Quit the sunlight, cut the rhyming, drop the glass—
Follow after with the others,
Where some dusky heathen smothers
Us with marigolds in lieu of English grass.

Or, perchance, in years to follow,
I shall watch your plump sides hollow,
See Carnifex (gone lame) become a corse—
See old age at last o'erpower you,
And the Station Pack devour you,
I shall chuckle then, O Undertaker's Horse!

But to insult, jibe, and quest, I've
Still the hideously suggestive
Trot that hammers out the grim and warning text,
And I hear it hard behind me
In what place soe'er I find me:—
'Sure to catch you sooner or later. Who's the next?'

## ONE VICEROY RESIGNS

LORD DUFFERIN TO LORD LANSDOWNE :—

So here's your Empire. No more wine, then?
    Good.
We'll clear the Aides and *khitmutgars* away.
(You'll know that fat old fellow with the knife—
He keeps the Name Book, talks in English, too,
And almost thinks himself the Government.)
O Youth, Youth, Youth! Forgive me, you're so
    young.
Forty from sixty—twenty years of work
And power to back the working. *Ay de mi!*
You want to know, you want to see, to touch
And, by your lights, to act. It's natural.
I wonder can I help you? Let me try.
You saw—what did you see from Bombay east?
Enough to frighten any one but me?
Neat that! It frightened Me in Eighty-Four!
You shouldn't take a man from Canada

And bid him smoke in powder-magazines;
Nor with a Reputation such as—Bah!
That ghost has haunted me for twenty years,
My Reputation now full-blown—Your fault—
Yours, with your stories of the strife at Home,
Who's up, who's down, who leads and who is led—
One reads so much, one hears so little here.
Well, now's your turn of exile. I go back
To Rome and leisure. All roads lead to Rome.
Or books—the refuge of the destitute.
When you . . . that brings me back to India. See!
Start clear. I couldn't. Egypt served my turn.
You'll never plumb the Oriental mind,
And if you did, it isn't worth the toil.
Think of a sleek French priest in Canada;
Divide by twenty half-breeds. Multiply
By twice the Sphinx's silence. There's your East,
And you're as wise as ever. So am I.
Accept on trust and work in darkness, strike
At venture, stumble forward, make your mark,
(It's chalk on granite) then thank God no flame

Leaps from the rock to shrivel mark and man.
I'm clear—my mark is made. Three months of drouth
Had ruined much. It rained and washed away
The specks that might have gathered on my Name.
I took a country twice the size of France,
And shuttered up one doorway in the North.
I stand by those. You'll find that both will pay,
I pledged my Name on both—they're yours to-night.
Hold to them—they hold fame enough for two.
I'm old, but I shall live till Burma pays.
Men there — *not* German traders — Cr-sthw-te knows—
You'll find it in my papers. For the North
Guns always—quietly—but always guns.
You've seen your Council? Yes, they'll try to rule,
And prize their Reputations. Have you met
A grim lay-reader with a taste for coins,
And faith in Sin most men withhold from God?
He's gone to England. R-p-n knew his grip
And kicked. A Council always has its H-pes.
They look for nothing from the West but Death

Or Bath or Bournemouth. Here 's their ground.
They fight
Until the Middle Classes take them back,
One of ten millions plus a C. S. I.,
Or drop in harness. Legion of the Lost?
Not altogether. Earnest, narrow men,
But chiefly earnest, and they 'll do your work,
And end by writing letters to the *Times*.
(Shall *I* write letters, answering H-nt-r—fawn
With R-p-n on the Yorkshire grocers? Ugh!)
They have their Reputations. Look to one—
I work with him—the smallest of them all,
White-haired, red-faced, who sat the plunging horse
Out in the garden. He 's your right-hand man,
And dreams of tilting W-ls-y from the throne,
But while he dreams gives work we cannot buy:
He has his Reputation—wants the Lords
By way of Frontier Roads. Meantime, I think,
He values very much the hand that falls
Upon his shoulder at the Council table—
Hates cats and knows his business: *which is yours*.
Your business! Twice a hundred million souls.
Your business! I could tell you what I did

Some nights of Eighty-five, at Simla, worth
A Kingdom's ransom. When a big ship drives
God knows to what new reef, the man at the wheel
Prays with the passengers. They lose their lives,
Or rescued go their way; but he's no man
To take his trick at the wheel again. That's worse
Than drowning. Well, a galled Mashobra mule
(You'll see Mashobra) passed me on the Mall,
And I was—some fool's wife had ducked and bowed
To show the others I would stop and speak.
Then the mule fell—three galls, a hand-breadth each,
Behind the withers. Mrs. Whatsisname
Leers at the mule and me by turns, thweet thoul!
'How could they make him carry such a load!'
I saw—it isn't often I dream dreams—
More than the mule that minute—smoke and flame
From Simla to the haze below. That's weak.
You're younger. You'll dream dreams before you've done.

You've youth, that's one; good workmen—that
means two
Fair chances in your favour. Fate's the third.
I know what *I* did. Do you ask me, 'Preach'?
I answer by my past or else go back
To platitudes of rule—or take you thus
In confidence and say:—'You know the trick:
'You've governed Canada. You know. *You*
know!'
And all the while commend you to Fate's hand
(Here at the top one loses sight o' God),
Commend you, then, to something more than
you—
The Other People's blunders and . . . that's all,
I'd agonise to serve you if I could.
It's incommunicable, like the cast
That drops the tackle with the gut adry.
Too much—too little—there's your salmon lost!
And so I tell you nothing—wish you luck,
And wonder—how I wonder!—for your sake
And triumph for my own. You're young, you're
young,
You hold to half a hundred Shibboleths.
I'm old. I followed Power to the last,

Gave her my best, and Power followed Me.
It 's worth it—on my soul I 'm speaking plain,
Here by the claret glasses!—worth it all.
I gave—no matter what I gave—I win.
I *know* I win. Mine 's work, good work that lives!
A country twice the size of France—the North
Safeguarded. That 's my record: sink the rest
And better if you can. The Rains may serve,
Rupees may rise — three pence will give you
Fame—
It 's rash to hope for sixpence—If they rise
Get guns, more guns, and lift the salt-tax.
Oh!
I told you what the Congress meant or thought?
I 'll answer nothing. Half a year will prove
The full extent of time and thought you 'll spare
To Congress. Ask a Lady Doctor *once*
How little Begums see the light—deduce
Thence how the True Reformer's child is born.
It 's interesting, curious . . . and vile.
I told the Turk he was a gentleman.
I told the Russian that his Tartar veins
Bled pure Parisian ichor; and he purred.
The Congress doesn't purr. I think it swears.

You 're young—you 'll swear too ere you 've reached
the end.
The End! God help you, if there be a God.
(There must be one to startle Gl-dst-ne's soul
In that new land where all the wires are cut,
And Cr-ss snores anthems on the asphodel.)
God help you! And I 'd help you if I could,
But that 's beyond me. Yes, your speech was
crude.
Sound claret after olives—yours and mine;
But Medoc slips into vin ordinaire.
(I 'll drink my first at Genoa to your health)
Raise it to Hock. You 'll never catch my style.
And, after all, the middle-classes grip
The middle-class—for Brompton talk Earl's Court.
Perhaps you 're right. I 'll see you in the *Times*
A quarter-column of eye-searing print,
A leader once a quarter—then a war;
The Strand abellow through the fog:—'Defeat!'
''Orrible slaughter!' While you lie awake
And wonder. Oh, you 'll wonder ere you 're free!
I wonder now. The four years slide away
So fast, so fast, and leave me here alone.
R—y, C-lv-n, L—l, R-b-rts, B-ck, the rest,

Princes and Powers of Darkness, troops and trains,
(I *cannot* sleep in trains), land piled on land,
Whitewash and weariness, red rockets, dust,
White snows that mocked me, palaces — with
draughts,
And W-stl-nd with the drafts he couldn't pay,
Poor W-ls-n reading his obituary
Before he died, and H-pe, the man with bones,
And A-tch-s-n a dripping mackintosh
At Council in the Rains, his grating 'Sirrr'
Half drowned by H-nt-r's silky: 'Bát my lahd.
Hunterian always: M-rsh-l spinning plates
Or standing on his head; the Rent Bill's roar,
A hundred thousand speeches, much red cloth,
And Smiths thrice happy if I call them Jones,
(I can't remember half their names) or reined
My pony on the Mall to greet their wives.
More trains, more troops, more dust, and then all's
done.
Four years, and I forget. If I forget,
How will *they* bear me in their minds? The
North
Safeguarded—nearly (R-b-rts knows the rest),
A country twice the size of France annexed.

That stays at least. The rest may pass—may pass—
Your heritage—and I can teach you naught.
'High trust,' 'vast honour,' 'interests twice as vast,'
'Due reverence to your Council'—keep to those.
I envy you the twenty years you 've gained,
But not the five to follow. What 's that? One!
Two!—Surely not so late. Good-night. *Don't* dream.

## THE GALLEY-SLAVE

Oh gallant was our galley from her carven steering-wheel
To her figurehead of silver and her beak of hammered steel;
The leg-bar chafed the ankle and we gasped for cooler air,
But no galley on the water with our galley could compare!

Our bulkheads bulged with cotton and our masts were stepped in gold—
We ran a mighty merchandise of niggers in the hold;
The white foam spun behind us, and the black shark swam below,
As we gripped the kicking sweep-head and we made that galley go.

It was merry in the galley, for we revelled now
and then—
If they wore us down like cattle, faith, we fought
and loved like men!
As we snatched her through the water, so we
snatched a minute's bliss,
And the mutter of the dying never spoiled the
lover's kiss.

Our women and our children toiled beside us in
the dark—
They died, we filed their fetters, and we heaved
them to the shark—
We heaved them to the fishes, but so fast the
galley sped
We had only time to envy, for we could not mourn
our dead.

Bear witness, once my comrades, what a hard-bit
gang were we—
The servants of the sweep-head, but the masters
of the sea!

By the hands that drove her forward as she plunged and yawned and sheered,
Woman, Man, or God or Devil, was there anything we feared?

Was it storm? Our fathers faced it and a wilder never blew;
Earth that waited for the wreckage watched the galley struggle through.
Burning noon or choking midnight, Sickness, Sorrow, Parting, Death?
Nay, our very babes would mock you had they time for idle breath.

But to-day I leave the galley and another takes my place;
There's my name upon the deck-beam—let it stand a little space.
I am free—to watch my messmates beating out to open main,
Free of all that Life can offer—save to handle sweep again.

By the brand upon my shoulder, by the gall of
clinging steel,
By the welt the whips have left me, by the scars
that never heal;
By eyes grown old with staring through the sun-
wash on the brine,
I am paid in full for service—would that service
still were mine!

Yet they talk of times and seasons and of woe
the years bring forth,
Of our galley swamped and shattered in the rollers
of the North.
When the niggers break the hatches and the
decks are gay with gore,
And a craven-hearted pilot crams her crashing
on the shore,

She will need no half-mast signal, minute-gun,
or rocket-flare,
When the cry for help goes seaward, she will find
her servants there.

Battered chain-gangs of the orlop, grizzled drafts
of years gone by,
To the bench that broke their manhood, they
shall lash themselves and die.

Hale and crippled, young and aged, paid, deserted,
shipped away—
Palace, cot, and lazaretto shall make up the tale
that day,
When the skies are black above them, and the
decks ablaze beneath,
And the top-men clear the raffle with their clasp-
knives in their teeth.

It may be that Fate will give me life and leave
to row once more—
Set some strong man free for fighting as I take
awhile his oar.
But to-day I leave the galley. Shall I curse her
service then?
God be thanked—whate'er comes after, I have
lived and toiled with Men!

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

WHERE the sober-coloured cultivator smiles
On his *byles*;
Where the cholera, the cyclone, and the crow
Come and go;
Where the merchant deals in indigo and tea,
Hides and *ghi*;
Where the Babu drops inflammatory hints
In his prints;
Stands a City—Charnock chose it—packed away
Near a Bay—
By the sewage rendered fetid, by the sewer
Made impure,
By the Sunderbunds unwholesome, by the swamp
Moist and damp;
And the City and the Viceroy, as we see,
Don't agree.

Once, two hundred years ago, the trader came
Meek and tame.
Where his timid foot first halted, there he stayed,
Till mere trade
Grew to Empire, and he sent his armies forth
South and North,
Till the country from Peshawar to Ceylon
Was his own.
Thus the midday halt of Charnock—more's the pity!—
Grew a City.
As the fungus sprouts chaotic from its bed,
So it spread—
Chance-directed, chance-erected, laid and built
On the silt—
Palace, byre, hovel—poverty and pride—
Side by side;
And, above the packed and pestilential town,
Death looked down.

But the Rulers in that City by the Sea
Turned to flee—

Fled, with each returning Spring-tide from its ills
To the Hills.
From the clammy fogs of morning, from the blaze
Of the days,
From the sickness of the noontide, from the heat,
Beat retreat;
For the country from Peshawar to Ceylon
Was their own.
But the Merchant risked the perils of the Plain
For his gain.

Now the resting-place of Charnock, 'neath the palms,
Asks an alms,
And the burden of its lamentation is,
Briefly, this:—
'Because, for certain months, we boil and stew,
'So should you.

'Cast the Viceroy and his Council, to perspire
'In our fire!'
And for answer to the argument, in vain
We explain
That an amateur Saint Lawrence cannot cry:—
'*All* must fry!'
That the Merchant risks the perils of the Plain
For his gain.
Nor can Rulers rule a house that men grow rich in,
From its kitchen.

Let the Babu drop inflammatory hints
In his prints;
And mature—consistent soul—his plan for stealing
To Darjeeling:
Let the Merchant seek, who makes his silver pile,
England's isle;
Let the City Charnock pitched on—evil day!—
Go Her way.
Though the argosies of Asia at Her doors
Heap their stores,

Though Her enterprise and energy secure
Income sure,
Though 'out-station orders punctually obeyed'
Swell Her trade—
*Still*, for rule, administration, and the rest,
Simla's best!

## IN SPRING TIME

My garden blazes brightly with the rose-bush and the peach,
And the *köil* sings above it, in the *siris* by the well,
From the creeper-covered trellis comes the squirrel's chattering speech,
And the blue jay screams and flutters where the cheery *sat-bhai* dwell.
But the rose has lost its fragrance, and the *köil's* note is strange;
I am sick of endless sunshine, sick of blossom-burdened bough.
Give me back the leafless woodlands where the winds of Springtime range--
Give me back one day in England, for it 's Spring in England now!

Through the pines the gusts are booming, o'er the
brown fields blowing chill,
From the furrow of the ploughshare streams the
fragrance of the loam,
And the hawk nests on the cliffside and the jack-
daw in the hill,
And my heart is back in England 'mid the sights
and sounds of Home.
But the garland of the sacrifice this wealth of rose
and peach is,
Ah! *köil,* little *köil,* singing on the *siris* bough,
In my ears the knell of exile your ceaseless bell-like
speech is—
Can *you* tell me aught of England or of Spring in
England now?

## GIFFEN'S DEBT

*Imprimis* he was 'broke.' Thereafter left
His regiment and, later, took to drink;
Then, having lost the balance of his friends,
'Went Fantee'—joined the people of the land,
Turned three parts Mussulman and one Hindu,
And lived among the Gauri villagers,
Who gave him shelter and a wife or twain,
And boasted that a thorough, full-blood *sahib*
Had come among them. Thus he spent his time,
Deeply indebted to the village *shroff*
(Who never asked for payment), always drunk,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels;
Forgetting that he was an Englishman.

You know they dammed the Gauri with a dam,
And all the good contractors scamped their work
And all the bad material at hand
Was used to dam the Gauri—which was cheap,

And, therefore, proper. Then the Gauri burst,
And several hundred thousand cubic tons
Of water dropped into the valley, *flop*,
And drowned some five-and-twenty villagers,
And did a lakh or two of detriment
To crops and cattle. When the flood went down
We found him dead, beneath an old dead horse,
Full six miles down the valley. So we said
He was a victim to the Demon Drink,
And moralised upon him for a week,
And then forgot him. Which was natural.

But, in the valley of the Gauri, men
Beneath the shadow of the big new dam,
Relate a foolish legend of the flood,
Accounting for the little loss of life
(Only those five-and-twenty villagers)
In this wise:—On the evening of the flood,
They heard the groaning of the rotten dam,
And voices of the Mountain Devils. Then
An incarnation of the local God,
Mounted upon a monster-neighing horse,
And flourishing a flail-like whip, came down,
Breathing ambrosia, to the villages,

And fell upon the simple villagers
With yells beyond the power of mortal throat,
And blows beyond the power of mortal hand,
And smote them with the flail-like whip, and drove
Them clamorous with terror up the hill,
And scattered, with the monster-neighing steed,
Their crazy cottages about their ears,
And generally cleared those villages.
Then came the water, and the local God,
Breathing ambrosia, flourishing his whip,
And mounted on his monster-neighing steed,
Went down the valley with the flying trees
And residue of homesteads, while they watched
Safe on the mountain-side these wondrous things,
And knew that they were much beloved of Heaven.

Wherefore, and when the dam was newly built,
They raised a temple to the local God,
And burnt all manner of unsavoury things
Upon his altar, and created priests,
And blew into a conch and banged a bell,
And told the story of the Gauri flood
With circumstance and much embroidery.

So he, the whiskified Objectionable,
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels,
Became the tutelary Deity
Of all the Gauri valley villages . . .
And may in time become a Solar Myth

## TWO MONTHS

### In June

No hope, no change! The clouds have shut us in,
  And through the cloud the sullen Sun strikes down
  Full on the bosom of the tortured Town,
Till Night falls heavy as remembered sin
That will not suffer sleep or thought of ease,
  And, hour on hour, the dry-eyed Moon in spite
  Glares through the haze and mocks with watery light
The torment of the uncomplaining trees.

Far off, the Thunder bellows her despair
To echoing Earth, thrice parched. The lightnings fly

In vain. No help the heaped-up clouds afford,
But wearier weight of burdened, burning air.
What truce with Dawn? Look, from the aching
sky,
Day stalks, a tyrant with a flaming sword!

## TWO MONTHS

### In September

At dawn there was a murmur in the trees,
  A ripple on the tank, and in the air
  Presage of coming coolness—everywhere
A voice of prophecy upon the breeze.
Up leapt the Sun and smote the dust to gold,
  And strove to parch anew the heedless land,
All impotently, as a King grown old
  Wars for the Empire crumbling 'neath his hand.

One after one the lotos-petals fell,
Beneath the onslaught of the rebel year,
In mutiny against a furious sky ;
And far-off Winter whispered :—'It is well!
'Hot Summer dies. Behold your help is near,
'For when men's need is sorest, then come I.'

## L'ENVOI

*To whom it may concern.*

The smoke upon your Altar dies,
  The flowers decay,
The Goddess of your sacrifice
  Has flown away.
What profit then to sing or slay
The sacrifice from day to day?

'We know the Shrine is void,' they said,
  'The Goddess flown—
'Yet wreaths are on the altar laid—
  'The Altar-Stone
'Is black with fumes of sacrifice,
'Albeit She has fled our eyes.

'For, it may be, if still we sing
  'And tend the Shrine,

'Some Deity on wandering wing
'May there incline;
'And, finding all in order meet,
'Stay while we worship at Her feet.'

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